



**For Immediate Release:**

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## **CONNECTICUT SCHOOLS AWARDED NATIONAL GREEN RIBBON SCHOOL DISTINCTION**

U.S. Department of Education Honors Schools for Environmental and Sustainability Efforts

HARTFORD, CT—The U.S. Department of Education has named two Connecticut schools as Green Ribbon Schools for their efforts to reduce environmental impact and costs, improve the health of students and staff, and offer environmental education.

The two schools are Interdistrict Discovery Magnet School in Bridgeport and Greenwich Academy in Greenwich. They were among 48 schools from 30 states to receive this honor. This is the third year of the Green Ribbon School award program and the second year Connecticut nominated schools for consideration.

“As we prepare children to compete in a global economy, it’s critical that we take a hands-on approach to improving the facilities where learning takes place,” said Governor Dannel P. Malloy. “Teachers, administrators, staff and students at Greenwich Academy and Interdistrict Discovery Magnet School in Bridgeport are to be commended for their forward-thinking efforts to lead the nation in green initiatives that save state and federal dollars and help sustain our environment.”

“Environmental education offers our youngsters an invaluable opportunity. Through the work of greening their schools and communities, students help create healthier learning environments. They also develop the skills for success in college and 21st century careers,” said Commissioner of Education Stefan Pryor. “We thank the Connecticut Green LEAF Schools program for its stewardship of the nomination process. And we applaud Bridgeport’s Interdistrict Discovery Magnet School and Greenwich Academy for earning Green Ribbon School awards this year.”

“The Green LEAF Schools program supports DEEP’s efforts to help move Connecticut to a new energy future and to protect and preserve the natural resources of our state. By actively encouraging the next generation of environmental stewards, the Green LEAF program ensures that we will have new leaders to take up these causes and to ensure our continued progress toward important energy and environmental goals,” said Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) Commissioner Rob Klee.

“DAS congratulates the honorees for their incredible work in promoting healthy school environments in Connecticut’s school buildings. We are proud to be an integral part of the process and its successes over the last two years. It is rewarding to see Connecticut recognized on a national level for all of the hard work that we do,” said Department of Administrative Services Commissioner (DAS) Donald DeFronzo.

“These Connecticut Green Ribbon Schools are models for how going green can create healthy and productive learning environments,” said Department of Public Health (DPH) Commissioner Dr. Jewel Mullen. “The steps they are taking to promote healthy eating, physical activity and indoor air quality will lead to decreased obesity, lower risk for asthma, and increased attendance for their students.”

Interdistrict Discovery Magnet School and Greenwich Academy were nominated for the U.S. Department of Education’s Green Ribbon School program through the Connecticut Green LEAF Schools program.

The Connecticut Green LEAF Schools program is free and open to all K-12 schools, both public and private. Schools receive support to grow greener and focus on “LEAF”: leading, educating, achieving, and fostering healthy, green schools for all. Currently, 62 schools participate in the program, which operates through a collaboration of the Connecticut departments of Education, Energy and Environmental Protection, Administrative Services, and Public Health, along with more than 35 environmental and educational partners.

Including this year’s honorees, five Connecticut schools have earned federal Green Ribbon recognition, which means they are models for successful implementation of green principles and practices. The other three schools are Common Ground High School and Barnard Environmental Studies Magnet in New Haven and Environmental Science Magnet at Mary Hooker in Hartford.

About Interdistrict Discovery Magnet School in Bridgeport:

Interdistrict Discovery Magnet School of Bridgeport serves 524 students in prekindergarten to Grade 8. Located in an urban community, the school offers its students many outdoor experiences and capitalizes on partnerships with a variety of organizations, including Connecticut Audubon Society, the Beardsley Zoo, and Maritime Aquarium. Students use the school’s 90-acre urban woods and its school garden for nature study connected to the curriculum, such as raising trout in the classroom. Health and wellness are encouraged with physical activity and nutrition programs, and students learn from the innovative building with its solar power system and other green features.

About Greenwich Academy in Greenwich:

Greenwich Academy of Greenwich is Connecticut’s first private school nomination. The school serves 800 girls in prekindergarten to Grade 12. Greenwich Academy supports the principles of sustainability in the school’s curriculum to help students understand their relationship with the environment and prepare them to be informed stewards of sustainability. Greenwich Academy supports health and wellness with both students and staff. Greenwich Academy exemplifies sustainability in the management of its buildings and resources use, including reducing energy use by more than 15 percent in the last five years.

For more information, please visit [www.ctgreenschools.org/ctgreenleaf.htm](http://www.ctgreenschools.org/ctgreenleaf.htm).

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